DOCUMENT RESUME

ED 038 908 HE 001 452

AUTHOR Clark, Freeman Thomas
TITLE An Undergraduate Course in College and University Governance: Heightening Awareness of the Complexity of Institutions of Higher Education.
INSTITUTION American Association for Higher Education, Washington, D.C.
PUB DATE 3 Mar 70
NOTE 4p.; Paper presented at the 25th National Conference on Higher Education, Chicago, Ill., March 3, 1970

EDRS PRICE EDRS Price MF-$0.25 HC-$0.30
DESCRIPTORS Administration, *Courses, Financial Support, *Governance, *Higher Education, Institutional Environment, Institutional Role, School Community Relationship, *Student Participation, *Undergraduate Study
IDENTIFIERS *Michigan University

ABSTRACT

An objection often raised against student participation in university governance is that students don't know enough about institutions of higher education. An undergraduate course that focuses on the functions and role of the university would help answer that objection. Such a course has been developed at the University of Michigan and includes the following topics: the historical, contemporary, and possible future functions of higher education in society; financing the university; the campus and the city; the campus as a mass society; the need for intermediate groups; rehumanizing the campus; the structure of organizations-functioning, internal dynamics and communication patterns; educational roles-faculty, students, and administration; classroom management; and simulation learning. In this way, students may learn not only about their own institution, but also about others. (AF)

ED038908

AN UNDERGRADUATE COURSE IN COLLEGE AND UNIVERSITY GOVERNANCE: HEIGHTENING AWARENESS OF THE COMPLEXITY OF INSTITUTIONS OF HIGHER EDUCATION

Freeman Thomas Clark
Graduate Student
University of Michigan

U.S. DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH, EDUCATION & WELFARE
OFFICE OF EDUCATION

THIS DOCUMENT HAS BEEN REPRODUCED EXACTLY AS RECEIVED FROM THE PERSON OR ORGANIZATION ORIGINATING IT. POINTS OF VIEW OR OPINIONS STATED DO NOT NECESSARILY REPRESENT OFFICIAL OFFICE OF EDUCATION POSITION OR POLICY.

HE 001 452

Group 47

Tuesday Morning and Afternoon, March 3

HE

AN UNDERGRADUATE COURSE IN COLLEGE AND UNIVERSITY GOVERNANCE: HEIGHTENING AWARENESS OF THE COMPLEXITY OF INSTITUTIONS OF HIGHER EDUCATION

Freeman Thomas Clark
Graduate Student
University of Michigan

Students do not know very much about institutions of higher education, therefore they cannot participate intelligently in governance of colleges and universities. This is an objection often raised regarding the inclusion of students in the governance of these institutions. However, many observers of higher education suggest that student participation in governance is likely to increase. (Arkoff, 1969 & Muston, 1969).

Muston (1969) cites research results reflecting changes in governance structures and suggests that these "governance structures are catching college by surprise..." (p. 29). He states that many of the student demands for participation in the decision-making process"...reveal a naive view of the nature of academic organizations and the interests and commitments of other institutional publics" (p. 31). Yet Muston's suggested solution, that a new model must be found to provide representation and participation at the policy level, however necessary, does not address itself to his observation that students have a naive view of the nature of academic organizations. It would appear that part of the answer to the question of student participation should include provision for heightening awareness of the nature and complexity of institutions of higher education.

A partial answer to this problematic situation has been presented by Arkoff (1969) with his suggestion that an undergraduate course in higher education be provided. He states: "If students are poorly prepared for augmented roles in policy making, a simple solution would be to prepare them more adequately" (p. 643). In support of this approach he indicates that: "Although a chief task of education is to help the student understand his world, seldom is his scrutiny directed to the academic environment-a part of the world most immediate and relevant to him." (p. 693).

It is seen, however, from the materials employed in the "College Experience Seminars" (Arkoff, 1969) that attention tends to be focused upon the student within the institution. An alternative approach, developed independently at the University of Michigan in 1968, is to focus the course material to a greater extent upon the institution itself. The purposes of this endeavor were similar to those stated by Arkoff (1969): "...to assist students in exploring the purposes, processes and problems of higher education" (p. 644), but because of the difference in focus course topics included:

The historical, contemporary, and possible future functions of higher education in society.
Financing the university-Who pays?
The campus and the city.
The campus as a mass society-the need for intermediate groups.
Rehumanizing the campus.
Structure of organizations-functioning, internal dynamics and communication patterns.

Paper presented to Group 47 at the 25th National Conference on Higher Education, sponsored by the American Association for Higher Education, Chicago, Tuesday, March 3, 1970. Permission to quote restricted.

Educational roles-faculty, students, and administration.
Classroom management.
Simulation learning

Questions may be raised about the appropriateness of this type of offering within the academic curriculum. In response it is maintained that an undergraduate course in higher education may be justified for a number of reasons.

1) As Arkoff has suggested one task of education is to help the student understand his world. When an individual is an undergraduate, the institution is an integral part of his life.

2) It may be noted that institutions of higher education are coming to play a larger role in society. It is suspected that far too many students have spent their time in these institutions largely unaware of their operation except going to classes, taking notes, struggling through examinations, receiving grades, and finally graduating. Only under unusual circumstances would a student become at all familiar with the institution's budgeting process, its place in higher education overall, or a myriad of other aspects essential to its operation. It is herein suggested that more enlightened alumni, those who understand the value and complexity of higher education to a greater extent, will be better prepared to consider these institutions and their role in society.

3) The principles and processes involved in the operation of these institutions are generalizable to other institutions in society. This function of an undergraduate course in higher education was evident in a course offered in the Political Science Department at the University of Rochester during the Spring term 1968 by Mason, Clark, and Eden: The Politics of Administration. In this course special emphasis was "The organization and government of universities in relation to theories and administrative behavior." (Mason et al, 1968).

4) Students often maintain that they are not listened to-that the college or university is unresponsive to their inputs. Although this may be true in some instances, it is suspected that this is most often an erroneous perception. Perhaps as students become more aware of the nature of institutions of higher education they will more fully understand the parameters within which change may occur.

Some unanswered questions:

Should resources be devoted to heightening students' awareness of the complexity of institutions of higher education? Which ones?

If a course is the institution's response to this situation, can only students who are involved in governance enroll in the course? Or the converse?....

Is completion of the course somehow a prerequisite to participation in governance?

REFERENCES

Arkoff, Abe. An undergraduate course in higher education. Journal of Higher Education, XL, 8, Nov. 1969, pp. 643-648.

Mason, Thomas R.; Kenneth E. Clark; & James E. Eden. The politics of administration, Unpublished course syllabus, University of Rochester, Spring Term, 1968.

Muston, Ray A. Governance changes are catching colleges by surprise national survey shows. College & University Business, 47, 1, July 1969, pp. 29-31.